



Here and Now

Focus: Acknowledging and responding to contextual constraints

Materials needed: None



Use the QR code to find out more and see more cards in the NILE A-Z training activity series!

Aims

- To expose obstacles and factors inhibiting change
- To pre-empt teachers' rejection of approaches and activities that appear unfeasible

Procedure

PART OF THE INTO GROUP

Here and Now

1. In groups (one group per topic) teachers brainstorm aspects of the following aspects of their teaching context that prevent or make it difficult for them to change the ways they teach: the curriculum; the institution; their classroom; the materials and resources available
2. Teachers re-group (so that new groups include at least one member of the original groups).
3. New groups pool and extend their ideas.
4. Groups divide their lists of constraints into two sets: contextual features that can't be changed and those that could be.
5. Groups then discuss the features that could be changed and identify potential strategies (e.g. colleagues setting up small-scale classroom research projects; using classroom space in different ways; adapting textbook activities etc etc)
6. Groups take it in turn to present their ideas in a plenary session so that other participants can offer further suggestions.

Tip 1: The whole activity is intended to get teachers thinking 'outside the box'. To achieve this it is important to give them ample opportunity (in Stages 1-3) to think of all the most negative features of their particular contexts.

Tip 2: It is particularly important (in Stage 4) for teachers to differentiate between the two sets of problematic features and consider the potential for change.

Tip 3: To consolidate the activity, it might be useful if groups could 'fix' the best suggestions in a poster display.